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Reunification Gestures by Two Koreas Make Small Dent in 40 Years of Enmity

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By KAREN ELLIOTT HOUSE

Staff Reporter of THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

South Korean President Roh Tae Woo expressed optimism that his effort to reunify the two Koreas will produce results in only "a few years."

President Roh made his comments in an interview yesterday, shortly before North Korea's deputy foreign minister, in a surprisingly conciliatory statement at the United Nations, called for a confederation of the two Koreas with a shared military command and national assembly.

The tone of Kang Sok Ju's speech to the U.N. was its most important feature. Otherwise, the North Korean official repeated old calls for removal of the 42,000 U.S. troops and nuclear weapons in the South and the establishment of the peninsula as a nuclear-free zone.

"There is no hidden attempt to insinuate unification through communization and no intention to impose our ideas and system on the other side," Mr. Kang told the U.N. In the past, North Korea has insisted unification can come only through South Korea adopting communism.

The flurry of diplomatic activity aimed at reducing tensions and paving the way toward some sort of reunification of the Korean peninsula, divided since the end of World War II, was sparked by President Roh's offer this summer to meet North Ko-

rean leader Kim Il Sung. Mr. Roh repeated the offer in his U.N. speech Tuesday when he also called for a summit of the two Koreas, the U.S., Japan, China and the Soviet Union to defuse tension on the peninsula. Both Mr. Roh's speech and Mr. Kang's were devoid of the invective that long has characterized commentary by leaders of North and South Korea.

But it will take more than an end to 40 years of name-calling to bring about reunification. The two nations have vastly different political and economic systems. South Korea is emerging from a long period of authoritarian rule toward democracy, while North Korea remains a totalitarian state seemingly bent on creating a family dynasty with Kim Il Sung, 76 years old and ill, passing power to his son. And South Korea is emerging as an industrial power, while North Korea remains an economic backwater.

Regardless, Mr. Roh says he senses North Korea's isolation can't last given that its two leading allies, Moscow and Beijing, are seeking to integrate their economies with those of the industrialized world, including South Korea.

While acknowledging that North Korea would be the inferior partner in both population and wealth, and thus may shy away from true reunification, Mr. Roh said in the interview, "What we want at this point is to change the confrontational relationship to a more constructive one. Communist ideology is slowly changing and we'd expect that to affect North Korea."

For now, the president said, he seeks a transition period in which "our aim is to restore the national identity and develop trust between the two parties and build up mutual cooperation. That is our primary objective at this stage."

Asked if Asian neighbors would welcome a unified Korea, President Roh acknowledged there may be some reluctance. But he added, "Korean people maintained a unified existence for 13 centuries and now a half-century of division is a situation Korean people can't long endure." During its long history, Korea hasn't been an aggressive nation, he said, and there is no reason to assume a reunited Korea would be anything but peaceful.

President Roh, who meets with President Reagan today in Washington, will urge the U.S. to do what it can to end North Korea's isolation, aides say. U.S. officials say exchanges of academics and journalists between North Korea and the U.S. are likely. But the State Department said that while it welcomed Mr. Roh's initiatives, a cautious approach was required because of North Korea's record of "state terror."

Mr. Roh has been careful during his three-day visit to New York to emphasize that South Korea wants to retain strong relations with the U.S. because it is America's market and America's military that have helped Korea recover from the devastation and poverty of the Korean War.

Anti-Americanism in his nation is limited to a small group of students, he said. Persuasion, he said, is the best means for dealing with these students but he warned that if that fails, he is determined to use the law to protect and preserve "Korea's liberal democracy."

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South Korean Leader Calls for U.S. Links With North

By Don Oberdorfer
Washington Post Staff Writer

NEW YORK, Oct. 19—South Korean President Roh Tae Woo said today that the United States could consider lifting its 38-year-old ban on trade with North Korea and take other "meaningful steps" to help end the isolation of the North and ease the hostility on the bitterly divided Korean Peninsula. Roh, who will discuss his drive for South-North amity in meetings

with President Reagan and Secretary of State George P. Shultz in Washington Thursday, said that with the cooperation of outside powers such as the United States, the Soviet Union and China, "I think we can see national reunification in Korea by the end of this century."

The South Korean president spoke in a 95-minute interview with editors and reporters of The Washington Post and Newsweek one day after presenting a conciliatory speech on North-South relations to

the United Nations General Assembly.

Several hours before the interview, a North Korean official addressed the General Assembly without accepting any of Roh's proposals but also without using the harsh rhetoric North Korea typically directs at the South.

"I didn't expect any positive response from North Korea," said Roh about the speech by North Korean Deputy Foreign Minister Kang Sok Ju.

Noting that the usual "very strong accusatory tone" of the North was absent from Kang's remarks, the South Korean president said, "I hope this will be a turning point. We can probe a constructive dialogue with them."

Roh embarked this summer on a drive to reduce tensions and renew the dormant negotiations with the North by reversing the longstanding policy of isolating the communist regime and proposing a summit

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meeting with North Korean President Kim Il Sung in his capital.

The Reagan administration expressed support and sympathy but said it would withhold conciliatory U.S. gestures toward North Korea until after a "trouble-free" Summer Olympic Games in Seoul and after careful consultations with Roh and his government.

Reagan and Shultz will tell Roh Thursday that the United States is moving toward adopting some gestures toward North Korea but that these are not yet ready to be made final or announced, State Department officials said.

Among the moves being contemplated are resumption of permission for U.S. diplomats to have contacts and informal discussions with North Korean diplomats, an easing of restrictions on North Koreans traveling to the United States, revised regulations to make travel by Americans to North Korea less difficult and the possibility of North Korean purchase of carefully restricted U.S. goods such as medical supplies.

A presidential order to release North Korea from the strict limitations of the U.S. Trading with the Enemy Act, which has prohibited

nearly all trade with North Korea since the beginning of the Korean War in 1950, is not being seriously considered, a State Department official said.

Two weeks ago, Roh's government announced that it will drop all its trade barriers against the North except for those involving military-related items. Senior aides to Roh said there has been no positive reaction from the North so far.

In the interview, Roh said, "I'd like to ask the leaders of friendly countries, including the United States, to help us to draw North Korea into the mainstream of international society." He said that he will discuss this with Reagan.

Roh said the United States and South Korea should approach the trade issue "step by step" and that at present "we can think about lifting this total [U.S.] ban on trade with North Korea." He added that he did not expect Washington to lift its ban on supply of military-related items unless South Korea proposed such a step.

Roh suggested that academic exchanges between the United States and North Korea and other contacts can provide "a meaningful start" toward a constructive new policy.

In his address to the United Nations yesterday, Roh discussed and

essentially accepted several of the conditions that North Korean leader Kim earlier had put in the way of a summit meeting.

One North Korean condition that Roh had not discussed and which seemed to be an imposing barrier to a summit was that South Korea's national security or "anticommunist" law be abolished first. Roh said in the interview that if progress is made in the South-North dialogue and if the anticommunist law becomes a hinderance, "I'm willing to repeal some part of it."

North Korea's Kang said in his U.N. speech that it "will be difficult" to pursue a dialogue before repeal of the anticommunist law, but he did not pose this as a precondition in terms as absolute as some used in the past.

Kang repeated at length the reunification proposal of North Korean leader Kim, which dates from 1980, that communist and capitalist Korea maintain their existing systems but achieve unification and coexistence under the political umbrella of a Democratic Confederal Republic of Koryo.

Under Kim's proposal, Koryo would have a single combined national Army and send all foreign forces home, including the 40,000 U.S. troops stationed in the South.

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North Korean, at U.N., Sees No Quick Thaw

By PAUL LEWIS

Special to The New York Times

UNITED NATIONS, Oct. 19 — A senior North Korean official told the General Assembly today that he held out little hope for an early improvement in his country's brittle relations with South Korea.

The North Korean First Deputy Foreign Minister Kang Sok Ju, called for the reunification of the two Korean states on terms already proposed by President Kim Il Sung. Those terms have been rejected by the South.

Mr. Kang was addressing the General Assembly under an arrangement whereby both Koreas were allowed to

speak here for the first time. The two countries have observer status at the United Nations.

In an address to the General Assembly on Tuesday, President Roh Tae Woo of South Korea called for a summit meeting with President Kim and for an international conference to negotiate a permanent settlement on the Korean peninsula. His remarks followed a similar suggestion made last month by the Soviet leader, Mikhail S. Gorbachev.

Laying out the North Korean position today, Mr. Kang said North and South Korea should become autonomous, equal governments inside what he

called a greater Confederal Republic of Koryo that would represent them both at the United Nations and in foreign affairs. Koryo was the name of the ruling dynastic kingdom on the Korean peninsula for several hundred years beginning in the 10th century.

In a unified republic, Mr. Kang said, the two Koreas would maintain their different economic and political systems.

He called for withdrawal of the approximately 40,000 American troops in Korea and for a nonaggression pact between the two Koreas. He also said the United States must sign a formal peace treaty with his Government to replace

the 1953 armistice ending the Korean War, the only war the United Nations has fought to repel and punish an aggressor.

"Only when the confederal state is established can a durable peace be established in the Korean peninsula and the desire of the nation be put into effect," Mr. Kang said.

In an address to the Council on Foreign Relations in New York today, President Roh of South Korea also appeared to rule out any early improvement in relations between the two states, describing North Korea as a "closed, regimented and doctrinaire state" that is resisting a trend toward "pragmatism and openness" in other parts of the Communist world.

"I want to make it clear that we have

no illusion that bringing about reconciliation with the North is going to be easy," he said.

North Korea's decision to send a much lower level official than President Roh to address the General Assembly had already been interpreted by diplomats as a sign that it would have little encouraging to say about its tense relationship with the South on this occasion.

After the two Korean officials had addressed the General Assembly, many diplomats said the speeches showed that the Korean peninsula remains one of the most durable areas of East-West tension.

A South Korean spokesman, Hwan Sul, called the North Korean speech "a compilation of past proposals." But he said President Roh still wanted a Korean summit meeting "as soon as pos-

sible." Vernon A. Walters, the chief American delegate to the United Nations, called the North Korean speech "more conciliatory than in the past." But he said the speech itself included "the same old arguments" and put too much emphasis on the withdrawal of American troops from South Korea.

"When you have a problem with your neighbor, you should talk to your neighbor," Mr. Walters said.

Mr. Kang said that President Kim was ready for a summit meeting but that previous efforts to start discussions had failed because the South was not sincere about reunification.

For a meeting to be held, he said, South Korea must agree to a nonaggression pact, repeal laws discriminating against Communists and cease aggressive military exercises.

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USA TODAY _____

BAN UNITED STATES NUCLEAR PRESENCE IN SOUTH KOREA

The ratification of the Intermediate-range Nuclear Forces Agreement last year by the United States and Soviet Union was an unprecedented measure towards reducing nuclear weapons. Viewed from the perspective of the fierce arms race between the U.S. and the U.S.S.R., in the running for the 42 years since World War II, the signing was indeed an epoch-making event.

The treaty clearly reflects global desire for lasting peace. Banning INF is but one step toward the realization of that desire. Contributing as it does to the relaxation of international tensions, we hope it signifies an end to the international trend of arms race.

The Korean peninsula in northeast Asia stands in stark contrast to the spirit of this treaty. The United States has installed nuclear weapons on the soil of the Republic of Korea. Already tense relations between North and South are further heightened by the U.S. military aid to South Korea and repeated joint maneuvers by the United States, Japan, and South Korea. Since the Soviet Union's compliance with the INF treaty, by withdrawing SS-20 nuclear missiles aimed at Korea and Japan, any possible reason for continued U.S. deployment of nuclear weapons in Korea has likewise disappeared.

Clearly then, the U.S. nuclear presence in South Korea only serves to threaten peace in northeast Asia and the rest of the world. Moreover, the Korean peninsula becomes an imminent spot for provoking global nuclear conflict. In the name of peace, and the spirit of the newly signed agreement, we call on the peoples and government of the United States—take steps to relax military tensions, and remove your nuclear weapons from the Republic of Korea.

ALLIANCE FOR DEMOCRACY AND REUNIFICATION OF KOREA (HAN MIN RYUN) CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Chairman **BAE Dong-Ho**

3-6-8 Kanda Ogawamachi, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 101 Japan.

Tel. (03) 292-0671

KOREAN CONGRESS FOR DEMOCRACY AND UNIFICATION

General Secretary **KWAK Dong-Ui**

3-6-8 Kanda Ogawamachi, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 101 Japan.

Tel. (03) 292-0671

THE LEAGUE OF KOREAN YOUTH IN JAPAN

Chairman **KIM Kwang-Nam**

5-2-7 Sotokanda Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 101 Japan.

Tel. (03) 835-4051

KOREAN DEMOCRATIC WOMEN IN JAPAN

Chairwoman **YANG Young-Ji**

3-6-8 Kanda Ogawamachi, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 101 Japan.

Tel. (03) 295-2638

This advertisement has been paid by the contributions from those Koreans in Japan and Japanese, who have agreed with the opinions described above.